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Message Text

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73
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /026 W
---------- 025052
R 240750Z DEC 74
FM AMEMBASSY SANAA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4772
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

C O N F I D E N T I A L SANAA 2621

EXDIS

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: MARR, MASS, YE, SU
SUBJECT: SOVIET MILITARY VISIT TO YAR

REF: SANAA 2526; STATE 274568

1. DATT LTC PLUMMER AND I MET WITH JORDANIAN AMB MUSTAFA AND SENIOR JORDANIAN ADVISER LTC ABU ZAYD DEC 23 FOR EVALUATION EARLY DEC VISIT BY SOVIET MILITARY DELEGATION.

2. ABU ZAYD WHO FOLLOWED VISIT VERY CLOSELY FROM VANTAGE POINT WITHIN HEADQUARTERS STATED CATEGORICALLY THAT NO AGREEMENTS WERE SIGNED DURING VISIT. IN FACT HE BELIEVES AGREEMENT PROVIDING SOVIET ADVISERS WAS NOT DUE FOR RENEWAL, HAVING BEEN RENEWED BY FORMER CHIEF OF STAFF MASWARI LAST JUNE. NUMBER OF SOVIET ADVISERS HAS, HOWEVER, RISEN RECENTLY WITH ARRIVAL SEVENTEEN REPLACEMENTS (FOR OPERATIONS, TRAINING, NAVY ETC) BRINGING BACK NUMBER TO 119 RPT 119. YAR MILITARY IS RESISTING PLACEMENT OF SOVIETS IN SENSITIVE OPERATIONS SECTION, WHICH NOW RESTRICTED TO YEMENI AND ABU ZAYD
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HIMSELF.

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3. SOVIETS OBVIOUSLY WORRIED ABOUT STATUS OF ADVISERS SINCE THEY DID BRING WITH THEM OFFER TO FINANCE CONSTRUCTION 120 RPT 120 APARTMENTS FOR ADVISERS. SOVIET UNION WOULD PAY ALL CONSTRUCTION COSTS AND WOULD TURN APARTMENTS OVER TO YEMENI MILITARY AFTER FIVE YEARS. IN MEANTIME YAR WOULD SAVE HOUSING COSTS OF SOVIET ADVISERS IT NOW MUST FUND. ITS SOLE CONTRIBUTION WOULD BE LAND. I IMAGINE THIS MAY BE BASIS OF RUMORS EARLIER REPORTED BY IRANIAN AMBASSADOR.

4. THIS OFFER, CLEARLY DESIGNED TO STRENGTHEN INDIRECTLY POSITION OF SOVIET ADVISERS, IS HARD FOR YARG MILITARY TO REFUSE. ACCORDING ABU ZAYD, EVERYONE INCLUDING COS GHASHMI AND DEP CIC ABU SHAWARIB, HAS AGREED EXCEPT PRESIDENT HAMDI WHO IS DELAYING DECISION.

5. ACCORDING MUSTAFA, JORDANIAN ADVISORY TEAM IS NOW TO TOTAL NINETEEN OFFICERS AND TWENTY-FOUR ENLISTED MEN. JORDAN WILL FUND SIX OFFICERS ALREADY HERE (THREE COLONELS 23 OPERATIONS, INTELLIGENCE, AND SALADIN ADVISERS, PLUS THREE ENGINEER OFFICERS FOR BAB AL-MANDEB) AT COST OF 50,000 JD FOR TWO YEARS; YAR WILL FUND REMAINDER. MUSTAFA SAID HE IS ASKING AMMAN TO FLY TEAM IN AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE. ACCORDING HIM SIZE OF TEAM WILL ALLOW JORDANIANS TO FILL ALL ADVISORY POSITIONS WITHIN GHQ ITSELF TO EXCLUSION OF SOVIETS.

COMMENT: I DO NOT BELIEVE ANY ACTION WILL BE TAKEN AGAINST SOVIET ADVISORS UNTIL SAG AND YARG REACH AGREEMENT ON COMPREHENSIVE AID PACKAGE. EVEN THEN, APPARENT YARG INTENTION IS ONLY TO PHASE THEM OUT QUIETLY BY ATTRITION. BELIEVE SIGNIFICANT FACT ABOUT SOVIET MISSION IS THAT THEY APPARENTLY DID NOT AGREE TO PROVIDE ANY NEW EQUIPMENT, WHICH IS WHAT YARG HOPES TO GET FROM SAUDI ARABIA. FACT THAT SMALL AMOUNT OF OLD T-34'S, BTR-152'S ARMORED CARS ETC. ARRIVED IN HODEIDA DURING VISIT DOES NOT OBSCURE FACT
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THAT SOVIETS APPEAR TO BE UNWILLING TO COMPETE WITH SAUDI ARABIA IN PROVIDING NEWER GENERATION OF EQUIPMENT TO REPLACE KOREAN WAR VINTAGE EQUIPMENT YAR NOW POSSESSES.
NEWTON

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